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Security Council

Seventy-second year

Provisional

7979th meeting
Wednesday, 21 June 2017, 10 a.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Llorentty Solíz	(Bolivia (Plurinational State of))
Members:	China	Mr. Shen Bo
	Egypt	Mr. Aboulatta
	Ethiopia	Mr. Alemu
	France	Mr. Delattre
	Italy	Mr. Cardi
	Japan	Mr. Bessho
	Kazakhstan	Mr. Umarov
	Russian Federation	Mr. Safronkov
	Senegal	Mr. Seck
	Sweden	Mr. Skau
	Ukraine	Mr. Herasymenko
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Hickey
	United States of America	Ms. Sison
	Uruguay	Mrs. Carrión

Agenda

Peace and security in Africa

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Peace and security in Africa

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of Mali to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2017/522, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by France.

The Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Bolivia (Plurinational State of), China, Egypt, Ethiopia, France, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Russian Federation, Senegal, Sweden, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America and Uruguay

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): The draft resolution received 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 2359 (2017).

I shall now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements.

Mr. Delattre (France) (*spoke in French*): France welcomes the unanimous adoption of resolution 2359 (2017). Through this important and, in many ways, seminal text, the Security Cuncil expresses its full support for the Force conjointe du G5 Sahel, established by the Group of Five States for the Sahel (G-5) to combat the terrorist threat they face, which knows no borders. The resolution calls on the entire international community to provide logistical, operational and financial assistance to the G-5 States, in particular via the swift holding of a donors conference. Lastly, via the resolution, the Council expresses its determination to meet on a number of occasions in the months to come in order, among other things, to consider possible measures to be taken to support the deployment of the G-5 Joint Force France. France will make that a priority during its presidency of the Security Council in the month of October.

The resolution we just adopted provides robust and decisive support to a major African initiative, endorsed and authorized by the African Union, that seeks to combat terrorism. The resolution makes a contribution to the strategic approach to encourage the willingness of African countries to take responsibility for the security of their continent. It is fully in line with the need — promoted by the Secretary-General — to bolster the partnership between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations, especially in Africa.

The Joint Force will support and complement the efforts of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) by operating on territory thus far not covered and by conducting counter-terrorism activities, which does not fall within the mandate of MINUSMA. By contributing to securing the region, it will also enable MINUSMA to focus on its priority tasks and will facilitate the implementation of its mandate. It will also operate in coordination with the French forces of Operation Barkhane, with which operational contacts have already been established on the ground.

For France and for Europe, peace and security in the Sahel constitutes a crucial priority that has a direct impact on our own national security. The 4,000 French troops deployed in the region at the request of the G-5 countries are pursuing their counter-terrorism operations by supporting the forces of the G-5 States. Twenty of them have laid down their lives in the process. At a time when terrorism strikes everywhere throughout the world, we cannot leave the Sahel to become a new haven for terrorist organizations from all over the world. It is our collective security that is at stake in the Sahel, not just the security of the G-5 countries. That reality means that we must act together and to coordinate. It is for that reason in particular that the G-5 States have turned to the Security Council. France deeply believes that the Security Council has a moral and political responsibility to provide unanimous support to our African partners, who are coming together to combat the terrorist threat, in particular in the Sahel. That shows just how important our vote today is.

The Council has provided steadfast support to the building of African capacity to respond to crises. It has also been a steadfast supporter of African States and organizations in their determination to take their destiny and security into their own hands. Providing clear support to the G-5 Sahel Joint Force is therefore above all a demonstration of coherence to our African partners and friends. It is also a matter of promoting an ambitious vision, namely, that of a strategic partnership with our African friends.

African States and organizations are increasingly assuming responsibility for deploying their own forces to fight directly against terrorism, thereby complementing United Nations peacekeeping operations. We wish to take this opportunity to pay tribute to the sacrifices that they have made for their own security, and also for ours. We commend this profound and positive development with a view to guaranteeing international peace and security. It is our collective responsibility, and the responsibility of the United Nations in particular, to support them tangibly in their efforts at a political level — but also at a financial level, as often they lack the necessary resources to effectively combat terrorism. France intends to step up its efforts to support African States and organizations in their determination to take responsibility for their own security and to respond to the terrorist threat.

Let us make no mistake: resolution 2359 (2017) is a seminal text. Not only is the Security Council providing strong, decisive support for the mobilization of our African partners in the struggle against terrorism through the G-5 Sahel Joint Force, but the resolution also embodies a strategic vision, that of a partnership with our African partners in the field of peace and security, of which we are opening a new chapter today. Rest assured of France's determination to foster the profound, irreversible impetus that the Security Council has generated today in its relationship with Africa.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Mali.

Mr. Konfourou (Mali) (*spoke in French*): On behalf of the Group of Five States for the Sahel (G-5) here in New York, the Ambassadors of which are right behind me, I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for giving us this opportunity to take the floor on the occasion of the adoption of resolution 2359 (2017), concerning the Force conjointe du G5 Sahel, endorsed by the African Union.

I wish to convey to the members of the Security Council and to Secretary-General António Guterres the gratitude of His Excellency Mr. Ibrahim Boubacar Keïta, President of the Republic of Mali and Acting President of the G-5 Sahel, on behalf of his peers of Burkina Faso, Mauritania, the Niger and Chad, for this important resolution, which the Council has just adopted unanimously.

There is no need to highlight the importance of this Force for the stability of our shared space and for the hope that it raises in our populations, which have been sorely tried by transnational organized crime, which, if not quickly contained, will strike a heavy blow at the very foundation of our States. The creation of the Joint Force is therefore part of the shared will of our Heads of State to pool their efforts and their means to effectively combat terrorism, organized crime and trafficking in persons, which nowadays is a true threat to international and regional peace and security. Resolution 2359 (2017) is a clear message of the firm stand of the international community against terrorist groups, which came together recently to further destabilize our subregion. It is also a message of sthe international community's solidarity with the peoples of the Sahel.

We place great hope in the rapid deployment of the Joint Force, which is called to put an end to criminal activities along the shared borders of our countries. Moreover, the Joint Force will also contribute to the creation of conditions that will enable the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), as the Ambassador of France just highlighted, to fully carry out its mandate. It will create an environment that will foster the proper implementation of the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali, which emanated from the Algiers process, and that is conducive to the carrying out of infrastructure projects of the G-5 Sahel Priority Investment Programme.

I thank Council members for having understood that the G-5 Sahel Joint Force is not just another additional or superfluous force. Its operations will complement those of the forces already present in the region, that is, the defence and security forces of our respective countries, the French Operation Barkhane and MINUSMA. Coordination mechanisms between all those forces are provided for in the strategic concept of operations of the Joint Force.

Along with the security aspect, I must highlight that the G-5 Sahel Joint Force gives high priority to issues of development, good governance and the resilience of populations. The establishment of the Joint Force therefore expresses the will of the Heads of State of the region to create the conditions for development, security and lasting peace, as we are convinced that there can be no lasting peace without development, and vice versa.

I can assure the Council that the operations of the Joint Force will be respectful of gender, of human rights and of international humanitarian law. For all of the reasons I have just mentioned, I call for increased and more consistent support from our bilateral and multilateral partners in order to mobilize the necessary means for the effective operationalization and the efficient functioning of the Joint Force. In that regard, I welcome the contribution already announced by the European Union, and I am pleased that the resolution provides for the upcoming holding of a conference to mobilize and coordinate contributions from bilateral and multilateral partners.

We wish to move quickly because criminal groups will not wait. I can already assure members of the complete commitment of all of our States to rise to the challenge of implementing this resolution. Our Heads of State are ready to quickly operationalize the Force with our own resources as we wait for the support of the international community.

With that in mind, an Extraordinary Summit of the Heads of State of the G-5 Sahel, with the participation of the President of France, is scheduled for 2 July in Bamako. Major General Didier Dacko has been appointed Commander of the G-5 Sahel Joint Force. He is already in place to establish the force headquarters, and the battalions of each member State are being created with the means available.

Ending as I began, I reiterate the infinite gratitude of the States of the G-5 Sahel to each Council member for this historic and important decision, and also for their sense of commitment, which has made it possible to arrive at this outcome.

The meeting rose at 10.20 a.m.